

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, first, I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Rhode Island. As he said, we make every effort to ensure that the support for the men and women who serve in the military is on a bipartisan basis. The gentleman from Rhode Island is a key leader on a number of those issues, whether it is cyber, directed energy, and a host of others.

I appreciate all of the Members on both sides of the aisle who have spoken. That bipartisan support is what helped lead us to pass the House version of this bill by the biggest majority in 8 years. That does not mean we agree on everything, obviously, but when it comes to supporting the military, their interests are first, and I think we need to keep it that way.

The subject of this motion to instruct is a long-running program designed to support safety programs. While we have had votes on this on the floor and in committee over the years, it has never been a particularly controversial program, even though the gentleman from Rhode Island has consistently been against it from the start. But the point is that in both the House and the Senate bills this year, there are provisions dealing with these programs. We come to some resolution every year, and for 55 straight years the conference report has gotten signed into law.

I would like to correct one point, Mr. Speaker. I do not believe that the Army is opposed to this program. As a matter of fact, both Mr. ROGERS and I have talked to the Army about this, and they have not expressed in any sense that they are opposed to it. They were waiting to see what direction they are given, and they are happy to go implement that.

Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, our country has been buffeted by a number of tragedies: hurricanes; of course, wildfires going on now in the West. And the horrible, horrific murders in Las Vegas are much on our minds, as are the victims and the whole communities.

It is important to take time and to learn what that investigation yields so that we can, hopefully, prevent it from happening in the future.

I just want to point out that there is nothing, whether these provisions stay or go, that is going to have any effect on an event like we just saw in Las Vegas. As a matter of fact, in the history of this program, I know of no single instance where one of these weapons that has been disposed of for gun safety programs has been used improperly. As a matter of fact, most of these weapons go up on a mantle somewhere. They are collectors items. So it would be inappropriate, in my opinion, to try to tie that horrible tragedy in Las Vegas, or others, to these particular programs.

That leads me to the last point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, and

it is similar to the first. On a bipartisan basis, this House and, indeed, this Congress, come together to support the men and women who risk their lives to defend us. The world is getting more dangerous, and, unfortunately—the fault of both parties in both the executive and legislative branches of government—we cut our military too much. We are seeing the effects of that through declining readiness, through increasing accidents, and a whole variety of things where the fruits of that neglect is becoming more apparent.

But I think it is crucial, as we begin to rebuild and repair our military, that we not let other agendas, other issues, impair our ability to do so. I am concerned, for example, that some Republicans say: Oh, yeah, I will increase funding for defense, as long as you can cut that money in other parts of the budget.

I am concerned when Democrats say: Oh, I am for increasing defense, as long as you increase other parts of the budget.

I am concerned when anybody brings any other agenda, any other issue, that impedes our ability to support the men and women who serve our Nation. We ought to do our best to support them on the basis of those issues alone and let other debates, whatever they may be, stand on their own as well.

As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, motions to instruct are, of course, non-binding. I think, in this case, the better vote is to vote “no.” There are provisions dealing with this in both the House and the Senate bill. I hope that we can come to a reasonable conclusion on these provisions and the whole bill. But the goal is to defend the country and to support the men and women who serve. We can never be distracted from that goal.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1440

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas) at 2 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

The motion to instruct on H.R. 2810;

The motion to permit closed conference meetings on H.R. 2810, if offered;

The motion to suspend the rules on H. Res. 569;

The motion to recommit on S. 585; and

Passage of S. 585, if ordered.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2810, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to instruct on the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, offered by the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the motion.

The Clerk redesignated the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 184, nays 237, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 564]

YEAS—184

Adams	Clark (MA)	Ellison
Aguilar	Clarke (NY)	Engel
Barragán	Clay	Españillat
Bass	Cleaver	Esty (CT)
Beatty	Cohen	Evans
Bera	Connolly	Foster
Beyer	Conyers	Frankel (FL)
Bishop (GA)	Correa	Fudge
Blumenauer	Costa	Gabbard
Blunt Rochester	Courtney	Gallego
Bonamici	Crist	Garamendi
Boyle, Brendan	Crowley	Gomez
F.	Cummings	Gonzalez (TX)
Brady (PA)	Davis (CA)	Gottheimer
Brown (MD)	Davis, Danny	Green, Al
Brownley (CA)	DeFazio	Green, Gene
Bustos	DeGette	Grijalva
Butterfield	Delaney	Gutiérrez
Capuano	DeLauro	Hanabusa
Carbajal	DelBene	Hastings
Cárdenas	Demings	Heck
Carson (IN)	DeSaulnier	Higgins (NY)
Cartwright	Deutch	Himes
Castor (FL)	Dingell	Hoyer
Castro (TX)	Doggett	Jackson Lee
Chu, Judy	Doyle, Michael	Jayapal
Cicilline	F.	Jeffries